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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/757,416	01/15/2004	Soo Young Oh	0630-1934P	3383
2292 7590 01/05/2007 BIRCH STEWART KOLASCH & BIRCH PO BOX 747 FALLS CHURCH, VA 22040-0747			EXAMINER HECKERT, JASON MARK	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1746	
SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE		NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE	
3 MONTHS		01/05/2007	ELECTRONIC	

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Notice of this Office communication was sent electronically on the above-indicated "Notification Date" and has a shortened statutory period for reply of 3 MONTHS from 01/05/2007.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

mailroom@bskb.com

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/757,416

Applicant(s)

OH ET AL.

Examiner

Jason Heckert

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_.

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_.

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Claim Objections***

1. Claim 2 objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicant is required to cancel the claim(s), or amend the claim(s) to place the claim(s) in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claim(s) in independent form. Claim 2 does not further limit the structure of claim 1, but merely states that the drain operates according to a siphon principle. This seems to be redundant, as most drains use differences in pressure to allow water to drain from the bottom an apparatus when external forces, such as a pump, aren't implemented.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

1. Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakamura et al. in view of Morton. Nakamura et al. disclose a steam generator for a washing machine comprising a heater 6. Nakamura et al. does not disclose that the generator is hermetically sealed or has a drain. Both of these features are notoriously common in steam generation units. Morton discloses a sealed humidifier (col. 3 lines 20 – 22) with a drainpipe 34 with exit 40. This pipe has an upper opening disposed in the container higher than the water level 28 and hasu a lower end 36 positioned outside the container. Morton's drainpipe operates like a siphon, with the water flowing from the higher opening out the lower opening and can therefore be considered a siphon pipe. It would have been obvious at the time of the invention, to modify the steam generator of

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Nakamura et al. and provide a sealed container with a drain, as taught by Morton, in order to prevent leaks yet allow for the removal of residual water.

2. Claims 3-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakamura et al. in view of Morton and further in view of De Loach. Neither Morton nor Nakamura et al. disclose a siphon cap covering a drainpipe. De Loach discloses a water treatment apparatus that has an area for collecting water comprising a drainpipe 35 with a cap 81 disposed over top forming a channel along with water rises. This cover has a blocked upper side that covers the top of pipe 35 and is arranged so that water can flow through ports 83 that have a height of H. The solid area in between these ports functions as support ribs to keep the cap in place. Furthermore, these ribs area radially dispersed with the cap fixed above them, and therefore some fixing means equivalent to a groove must exist. Furthermore, ribs with grooves are a common support structure that is notoriously well known in the art and their use cannot be considered novel. In regards to claim 5, Morton discloses said features of a drainpipe as stated above. It would have been obvious at the time of the invention, to modify Nakamura et al. with the features of Morton, as stated above, and further include a drain cover as taught by De Loach in order to provide a channel for water to travel before exiting the system to prevent air from flowing out the drain.

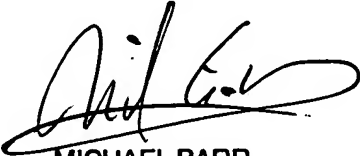
**Conclusion**

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jason Heckert whose telephone number is (571) 272-2702. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. to Friday, 8:00 - 5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Barr can be reached on (571)272-1414. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

JMH

  
MICHAEL BARR  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER